

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9292

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY MASERU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBABANE 0404

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, WZ

SUBJECT: KING SOBHUZA NAMES NEW PRIME MINISTER

REF: A. MBABANE A-001 (NOTAL); B. 75 MBABANE 1968 (NOTAL)

C. 75 MBABANE A-068 (NOTAL)

1. DURING A MEETING OF THE SWAZI NATIONAL COUNCIL ON MARCH 16, KING SOBHUZA II NAMED PRINCE MAPHEVU DLAMINI, COLONEL OF THE SWAZILAND ROYAL DEFENSE FORCE, THE UMBUTFO, AS PRIME MINISTER TO REPLACE PRINCE MAKHOSINI DLAMINI. NO OTHER CABINET CHANGES HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED, THOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS THAT SOME MINISTERS WILL BE REPLACED.

2. PRINCE MAPHEVU DLAMINI, A NEPHEW OF THE KING, IS 54 YEARS OLD AND RECEIVED HIS PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN MISSION SCHOOLS IN SWAZILAND AND AT THE MATSAPA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL. DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR, HE REPORTEDLY WORKED FOR A SHORT TIME AT THE UNITED STATES OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION IN JOHANNESBURG. HE THEN TRAINED IN THE
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RSA AS A VETERINARY ASSISTANT, AND SINCE 1962, HE HAS WORKED

DIRECTLY FOR THE KING AS A STOCK INSPECTOR AND MANAGER FOR HIS MAJESTY'S LARGE HERDS. HE HAS ALSO HELD POSITIONS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. PRINCE MAPHEVU HAS BEEN VITALLY INVOLVED IN THE BUILD-UP OF THE SWAZI NATIONAL DEFENSE FORCE, AND WAS NAMED IN NOVEMBER 1975 TO BE THE COMMANDER (AND ONLY COMMISSIONED OFFICER) OF THE NEW SWAZI ARMY. HE IS ALSO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SWAZI NATION FUND, THE TIBIYO TAKA NGWANE FUND, WHICH MANAGES THE EXTENSIVE ECONOMIC HOLDINGS OF THE SWAZI NATION. ACCORDING TO AMERICANS WORKING IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, MAPHEVU IS QUIET, INTELLIGENT AND FORTHRIGHT. HE HAS TRAVELED WIDELY IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA PURCHASING STOCK, AND ACCORDING TO THESE SOURCES IS BOTH PRO-AMERICAN AND PRO-SOUTH AFRICAN (REFAIR C).

3. COMMENT: THE KING'S APPOINTMENT OF MAPHEVU ENDS SIX MONTHS OF SPECULATION FOLLOWING THE KING'S ANNOUNCEMENT IN SEPTEMBER 1975, THAT PRINCE MAKHOSINI WOULD BE REPLACED. THE KING'S CHOICE OF A TRUSTED RELATIVE FROM THE TRIBAL ELITE SUGGESTS THAT THE HEGEMONY OF THE TRADITIONALISTS OVER THE MODERN POLITICAL BUREAUCRACY IN MBABANE WILL CONTINUE. WITH HIS APPOINTMENT AS PRIME MINISTER, PRINCE MAPHEVU NOW HOLDS THREE OF THE MOST POWERFUL POSITIONS IN THE KINGDOM--PRIME MINISTER, COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE FLEDGLING ARMY, AND CHAIRMAN OF THE SWAZI NATION FUND.
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